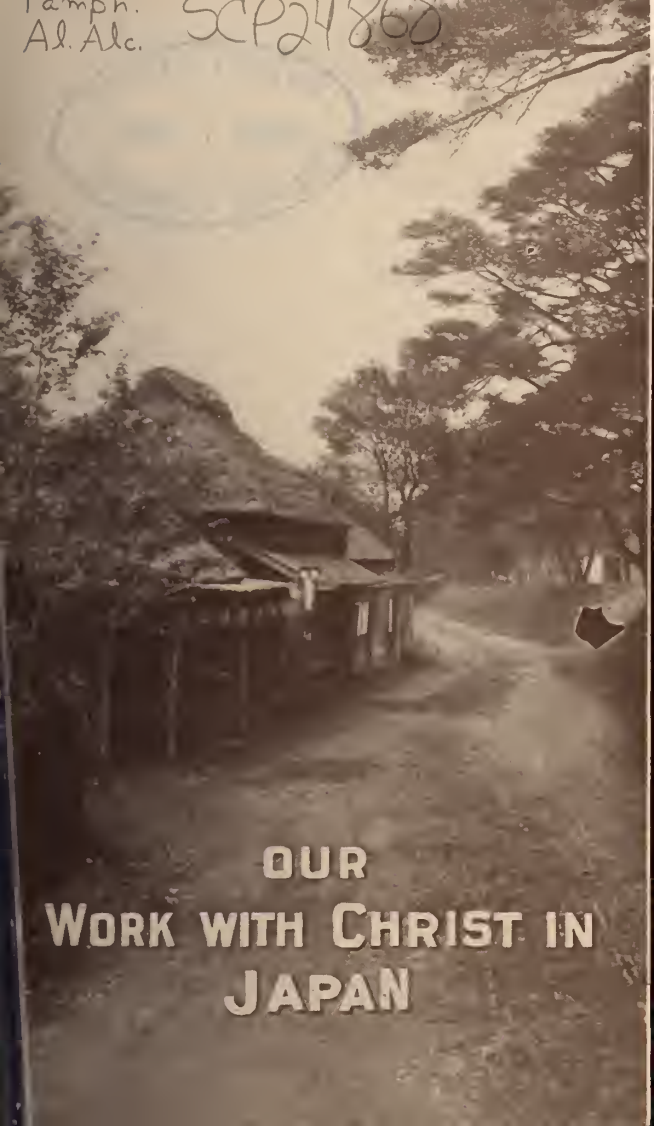


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**OUR
WORK WITH CHRIST IN
JAPAN**

SIDE LIGHTS

From a Missionary

"If imitation is the sincerest form of flattery we have certainly been highly flattered by the recent order that has gone forth from one of the Hongwanji Temples in Kyoto. It is reported that the Lord Abbot has ordered as a measure commemorative of the Coronation, that Sunday Schools be organized in all temples of the sect throughout the country. The writer has it from a prominent Japanese minister in Tokyo that a deputation of priests appeared at the Mombusho a short time ago, informed the officials of their project and sought advice as to the organization and conduct of such schools. The astonished officials informed them that they had had really no experience in the conduct of Sunday Schools and advised them to consult "Yaso" (the Christian Sect) as the only body doing extensive work in that line. That the work is intended to be permanent and thoroughgoing from the very first is evidenced by the fact that the number of scholars admitted is to be limited to twenty for the first year."

OUR WORK WITH CHRIST IN JAPAN

By SECRETARY ROBERT E. SPEER ON
His Recent Visit

Externally there were fewer changes in Japan than I had anticipated. The railroad stations and the railroad cars are just about as they were. There has not been a fraction of the architectural change that there has been in New York and many an American town. I saw no such outward changes as one sees all over our country, but inwardly there has been a great change and in nothing more than in the place and influence of Christianity. Eighteen years ago when I was here, audiences were small, the government schools were closed to Christianity, the churches were shabby and forms of worship ragged, and the temper of the nation was distinctly anti-Christian. Now great congregations come to hear the preaching. Worship has grown far more fervent. The nation openly confesses its need of religion.

Thanks to the foresight and the Christian spirit and judgment of men like Thompson and Hepburn and Ballagh and Brown and Verbeck the work of all the Presbyterian and Reformed churches in Japan is one work with a thorough understanding as to territorial occupation and with some real unity of

plan in the institutional work of the mission. The absolute union of all the fruitage of the missions in the Nihon Kirisuto Kyokai, or the Church of Christ in Japan, and the trust which the missions have one of another make it possible to interlace their work without too sharp territorial divisions. The islands of Kyushu and Shikoku are cared for respectively by the Dutch Reformed and Southern Presbyterian missions although we have a station on Shikoku at Matsuyama across the Inland Sea from Hiroshima. Most of our work, however, is on the main Island of Hondo from Tokyo southward. North of Tokyo the German Reformed mission carries on its strong work in Sendai as a center, and north of that are further stations of the Dutch Reformed mission, and then on the northern island of the Hokkaido our own missionaries are found again in this frontier and pioneer section of Japan.

Clear across on the opposite coast of Japan in the most stubborn and conservative Buddhist section of the country are our two stations of Kanazawa and Fukui. In spite of such opposition, however, and though the rain was falling steadily, we met a little church full of some of the best people in Fukui on a weekday afternoon and in the evening saw the evangelistic tent full of men and women, boys and girls who listened for



Onomichi Christians

nearly three hours to the songs and addresses, one of which was made by a converted Buddhist priest who told of the tenacious way in which Christians had followed him until he had been won to their faith and who set forth with unique power the ability of Christ to do what he had found Buddhism impotent to accomplish for his life.

Between these east coast and west coast stations and on the main line north from Osaka to Tokyo, is the remarkable work in the old city of Kyoto which contains the most famous and beautiful Buddhist temples in the country. Unlike other Japanese cities, Kyoto is laid out with great regularity and the late Mr. Gorbold like a military strategist, planted churches and chapels in different sections of the city succeeding by God's grace in filling the work with a spirit of courage and hope that is beyond praise. In the evening the Yoshida church adjoining the University was packed to the doors and to the roof with students at a simple evangelistic meeting. One of the chapels is planted right under the eaves of the greatest Buddhist temple in Japan, with the ambition filling the heart of its young evangelist to build here a Christian church.

At the extreme southwestern corner of the main island of Japan is our new station of Shimonoseki. Here on a

beautiful site overlooking the bay and visible from all the steamers passing through, stands the beautiful new girls' school formed by the union and transfer of Sturges Seminary of the Reformed church in Nagasaki and our own girls' school in Yamaguchi. East of Shimonoseki along the northern coast of the Inland Sea are our evangelistic stations of Yamaguchi, Hiroshima and Kure with millions of people in these provinces, or ken, entirely accessible in the towns and country villages and offering as attractive and appealing a field as a young man can find anywhere for the richest use of his life.

Turning north at Kobe, where the southern Presbyterians have a useful training school for preachers and where the Congregationalists have a fine institution for women and the Canadian and southern Methodists, in union, one of the best educational institutions in Japan for young men, one comes to Osaka, the great manufacturing city of Japan with its factory conditions and industrial problems rivaling those of our congested western factory communities. Through the student-evangelists, and half a dozen churches with their own pastors, and many preaching places taking advantage of every special occasion and opportunity, a wide-reaching evangelistic work is done. East of Osaka and south, the peninsula of Ise and Wakayama juts out



Teachers and Students of Training School for Evangelists, Osaka

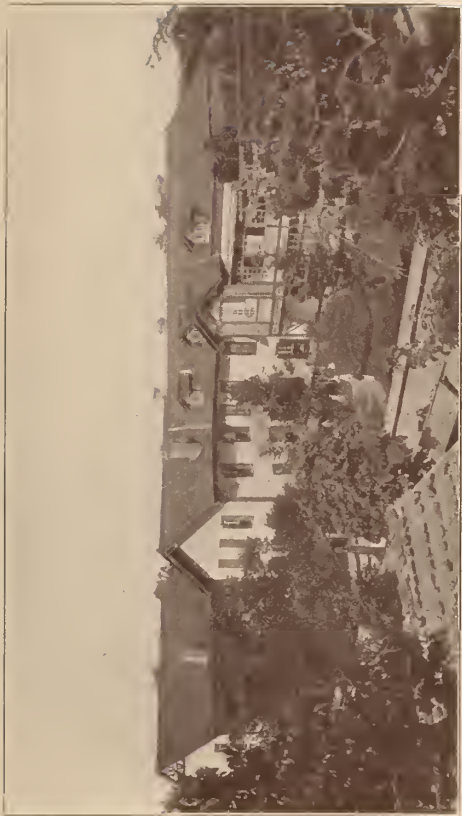
into the sea. On the west side of the peninsula at Wakayama and Tanabe, and on the east side at Yamada and Tsu, our missionaries are the only representatives of any Christian church. Yamada is the seat of the great Shinto shrines with their worship of the Imperial ancestors and near Wakayama is one of the great Buddhist training schools where Dr. Hail is always welcome to preach, where the priests themselves have set up a copy of the Nestorian tablet from China, and where in many ways Christianity is subtly influencing the Buddhist priesthood in one of its greatest centers. At Tsu we were glad to meet a young public school teacher who, a year or two ago of his own accord and out of the overflowing joy of his heart, had written to the Board to thank it for having been the means of sending to Japan a religion which had meant so much to him.

The largest center of our mission work in Japan is naturally in Tokyo. Here is the Meiji Gakuin, our union school and theological seminary carried on in cooperation with the Dutch Reformed mission and shared now in part by the northern Baptists. In Tokyo also is our largest school for girls, the Joshi Gakuin, whose close relations with the evangelistic life and work of the churches has given it a warm place in the hearts of Japanese Christians. Tokyo is an im-

mense, distended type of city full of little hills and hollows with perceptible differences of social and economic conditions. There is not the same concentration in a few sharply marked areas that one finds in a western city. There is gain in this. The Christian churches find more spots where they can take rootage and it is most encouraging in riding about through Tokyo to see how widespread the tendrils of Christianity are.

In the far north of Japan, in the Hokkaido, are the stations of Sapporo, Otaru and Nokkeushi far up at almost the extreme end of the island. Here is a new population made up in large part of the pioneering immigrant class with their characteristic openness of mind and freedom from change. Here amid the heavy snows of winter, the glories of summer times like the summers of Maine, and the richness of autumn colors rivalling the best beauty of our woods at home; and among people needing all that Christ can do for them and awakening to the needs, we have a little group of missionaries singularly adapted and devoted for just such service.

We left Japan just on the eve of the coronation ceremonies. It was a great time for Japan and the people are filled with a just and earnest sense of its significance. How long must it be before Japan is ready for another coronation, for the recognition of another King-



School Buildings, Hokurika Jo Gakko Kanazawa, Japan

ship which gives to every earthly ruler who acknowledges it, a new honor and power? If the day of this other crowning is long delayed whom will He who waits hold responsible?

THE RESULT OF A SMALL ACT

One evening as the missionaries connected with the Girls' School in Kanazawa were eating dinner a young Japanese gentleman called and asked to see the Principal, as he had important business to consult her about. He was invited in, and this was his request:

A well-to-do man of our city, not a Christian, had felt sorry for quite a number of the very poor children and some of the older people. He had taken them to his own small farm home and cared for them. He called this home which he provided for them an orphanage. He had used up about all of his own personal funds and then he applied to the city officials asking them to take over this work and have what would be termed a "Poor Farm" in our country, paid for out of the city's funds. The officials said they had no funds for this and could not do it.

Then he talked the matter over with certain friends and they decided to try and get up a musicale and help out this way.

He had applied to the young man who was telling the story and he had promised to help him all he could. This young man was the leader of the Kanazawa band. He had come to the school to ask if the foreigners—a community of about

seventeen of us—would help them by singing an English song for them.

The missionaries agreed to think the matter over and give him an answer in a few days. In the days intervening many and varied conferences were held among us as we had Germans, English, Canadians and Americans among the number, the majority of whom said they could not sing. Some objected because we knew nothing of this young man and they were afraid the musicale might have some objectionable numbers. We finally decided to ask him for a list of the songs that the Japanese singers were going to sing so we could be sure everything was all right. Being assured on this point we consented to do it and he seemed very much pleased.

The night finally arrived; we took the girls of the school who wanted to go to the musicale over to the hall about five o'clock. A musicale, theatre, "movie" or anything in the line of entertainment is from five to seven hours long, usually, and so the girls wanted to go early. We "singers" decided to go about eight o'clock as our part on the program was about that time as nearly as we could calculate and we did not want to sit there so long.

When we reached the hall we were escorted into a small waiting room until all the rest of our "singers" should arrive. We found all arrangements made

for us to smoke a cigarette or pipe as we should choose, if we cared to. At the close of that number we were all escorted into the room "en masse," and up in front of the crowd were chairs placed for us to sit on, facing the great crowd of Japanese who were all sitting on the floor. At the proper time we took our place on the program. When a piano solo was to be played by one of the missionaries, Miss L., who was sitting on her feet, on the floor, with the girls, very near to the piano, noticed the instrument had not been opened, so she got up and opened it, then sat down on the floor again. This was done in a natural quiet way. The band leader noticed it but said nothing.

After the entertainment was over, one of the missionaries who understands the Japanese language well, was asked if everything had been all right. He replied: "I am so glad we went. We would have made a terrible blunder if we had refused to have anything to do with it, for as far as I could understand the songs were all of a patriotic nature and you know what that means to a Japanese. Yes, everything was very good." Some time after this the young band leader began attending the English Bible Class at the little church. In time he became a Christian and was baptized.

Some four or five years after this musical Miss Luther was coming back to

America for her furlough. She was sick and it seemed doubtful as to whether she would get back to Japan or not. The night before she was to start home this same young Japanese came in our gate while we were at supper. He called for Miss L. and presented her with a beautiful farewell gift which is another custom of theirs when anyone is going on a long journey. While talking with her he said:

"Sensie,"—a title of love and respect they use very often—"you are going away and I may never see you again and I want to tell you something. You remember the first time I met you was in connection with that musicale? Do you remember on the night of the musicale when you got up and opened the piano? No? Well you did, and when you did that I thought to myself, She is a Christian, I wonder if that is why she did that; I will watch her and see. That small act made me want to study Christianity and as a result of it I am now a Christian."

This young man was the "point of contact" for several others. I can't say how many have become Christians through his influence but I know of several. This short story will give you some slight idea as to how every small thing counts for or against our religion in the lands where the people have to read the Christian's life because they

never have had the Bible to read and we stand as His representatives.

K. ANNA GIBBONS.



Statue of Kanazawa Hero, in Kanazawa Park

THE GOSPEL OF COMFORT

Two young men and one young woman who have recently been baptized in the town of Iwade, were led to Christ through the preaching of Mr. Kodama. After the baptisms the first communion service ever held in this little town was celebrated. After the celebration we called on a Christian woman who is dying with consumption and administered the sacrament to her also. Through this woman, Mr. Kodama was called to preach the Gospel in Arakawa where there have been three baptisms. A physician in the Red Cross Hospital where this woman was lying ill, had also through her efforts been brought to Christ. This is the story:

This doctor—aged thirty-one years—was the head of the medical staff in the Red Cross Hospital, his own specialty being eye diseases. He had his office just across the road from the Hospital building. He was, however, a victim of consumption and grew steadily worse, finally making up his mind that the only thing he could do was to wait for death. But he was not ready to die and did not know where to get information which would prepare him. While he was in this state of mind, I went one day in company with a fellow missionary who was visiting Wakayama, to visit Mrs. Matsuyama,

the woman mentioned above. The physician saw us go and inquired who we were. When told that we were Christian missionaries and were visiting Mrs. Matsuyama, he called on her himself. She told him she was a Christian and of her hope of glory. He then told her he himself was waiting to die but had no hope and did not know where to turn for instruction. Mrs. M. told him how to find Christ and gave him some books and told him to read them carefully and continually. He did this and through the books and the conversation of the woman he found the Saviour.

When he died his mother came to Mrs. M.—and with tears in her eyes thanked her for giving her son the books. “For,” said she, “my son had a whole library of books and he was a scholar, but there was not a book in all his library that could give him any peace when he knew he had to die. But the books you gave him and told him to read, he did read and found comfort and peace. I have put the books in his coffin to be buried with him.”

The mother was not a Christian and she buried the books with him thinking he would need them to guide him on the untried way in which he was going.

As we visited this woman we talked with her of the place where she was going. We asked her to read in her Testament Phillipians I : 21 - 24, which she

did. She said, "I know that I must die. My only anxiety to now has been for those whom I must leave behind. I have been anxious for my mother and husband. But since the New Year began I have left them to God for I know that he will do what is right and now without a care I am waiting for the call of my Saviour." I wondered as we left her if Mr. Kodama did not feel this was a rich reward for his effort for this soul.

J. B. HAIL.

REINFORCEMENTS NEEDED

The ranks of the missionary force in Japan have recently been depleted by the death of three of its strong men and the resignation of two others. Of those who have passed on, the Rev. David Thompson, D.D., was 53 years in service; Mr. Mac Nair, 32 years and Mr. Gorbald, 10 years.

Of the remaining 75 missionaries, 33 have been in Japan over 25 years and 19 have been there over 30 years.

THERE IS NEED OF STRONG REINFORCEMENTS!

Dr. Thompson went to Japan in 1862 and his missionary life covered the whole history of modern Japan, the development of missions, and the awakening of the Far East. When he went out to Japan his ship passed up from Java to Shanghai through the Sulu Sea and by Manila. The Philippine Islands were a sealed land then, and on a recent anniversary occasion Dr. Thompson recalled remarks which had been made on the ship with regard to the folly and impossibility of ever attempting missionary work in these islands. The Tai Ping rebellion was spreading its chaos over Central China. In Japan the Shogunate was

still in power. Dr. Thompson saw the old conditions in all these lands pass away. He lived through the whole of the Meiji era in Japan, saw the Taisho era begin, and passed away on the eve of the coronation of the new Emperor.

When Dr. Thompson came to Japan, as he said, "There was no Japanese church, no Bible translated, no preaching, no converts baptized, nor any prospects of any being made soon. For the published edicts against Christianity were everywhere displayed and the people were all hostile, indifferent or afraid. The northern boundary of Japan was indefinite and Korea was a sealed nation." Now all that world is passed away and before he died Dr. Thompson saw the ear and the full corn in the ear following the seed and then the blade of those early days, which called for such men of faith and love as he, and those with whom he labored, that we might enter into their labors.

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